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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

SUB-COMMISSION ON PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION AND
PROTECTION OF MINORITIES

Forty-ninth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1st MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Monday, 4 August 1997, at 10.30 a.m.

Temporary Chairman: Mr. EIDE
Chairman: Mr. BENGOA

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ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

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GE.97-13224 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN declared open the forty-ninth session of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities.

2. He had reported to the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-third session on the Sub-Commission's work and its response to resolution 1996/25, in which the Commission had requested the Sub-Commission to review its mandate and working methods with a view to improving efficiency and avoiding duplication with the Commission, giving particular attention to rationalization of its agenda, selection and conduct of studies and reports, the functioning and mandate of its mechanisms, implementation of existing human rights standards, consideration of alleged violations of human rights and enhancement of cooperation with Commission mechanisms and all relevant treaty bodies.

3. With regard to methods of work, he had reported on the Sub-Commission's discussion of how best to use the limited time available at each session and had provided statistics to illustrate the dramatic reduction in the amount of time available for debate among the experts compared with that devoted to statements by government observers and representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). To lessen the impact of such constraints, the Sub-Commission had decided to rationalize its agenda by reducing the number of items from 23 to 13.

4. As the expanding volume of documentation was often made available too late for proper study, the Sub-Commission was examining the possibility of extending the length of the session without incurring additional costs for the United Nations. In decision 1996/112, it had expressed its conviction that the time devoted to formal meetings could be reduced if the meetings were rescheduled in such a way as to leave time for in-depth study of documentation and informal consultations. Although the Secretary-General's response had been somewhat discouraging, he was convinced that some arrangement could be reached which would not entail additional costs for the United Nations.

5. With regard to methods of work concerning violations of human rights, the Sub-Commission had discussed at its previous session the practical feasibility and value of preparing a comprehensive report on such violations from all available sources, as required by Commission resolution 8 (XXIII). As opinions were divided on the matter, no decision had been taken. The same resolution invited the Sub-Commission to bring to the attention of the Commission particular situations which, in its view, revealed a consistent pattern of gross violations of human rights. Following a thorough discussion, the Sub-Commission had decided, in decision 1996/115, to avoid duplicating the Commission's work by taking no action at its forty-ninth session in respect of human rights situations which the Commission was already considering under its public procedure.

6. He had informed the Commission that, while the Sub-Commission was fully aware of the need for more thorough planning of the study programme and of the need to set priorities, it felt that further reflection was necessary both on

the number of studies and on selection and treatment. The Sub-Commission had decided, in decision 1996/113, not to propose any new study or report unless it was specifically recommended by a competent working group of the Sub-Commission. As no new study was currently proposed and final reports on practically all outstanding studies would be submitted at the forty-ninth session, the Sub-Commission would be in a position to discuss its study programme more freely and to recommend priorities in that regard to the Commission.

7. In addition to reporting on the Sub-Commission's constructive work on the administration of justice and the rights of detainees, the rights of indigenous peoples, the protection of minorities and action against contemporary forms of slavery such as child labour, the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, he had focused on recent work relating to economic and social rights, including the final report on human rights and extreme poverty (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1996/13) and the provisional report on the enjoyment of human rights and income distribution (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1996/14). The World Food Summit in November 1996, responding to the Sub-Commission's appeal in resolution 1996/25, had included in its Plan of Action "Objective 7.4", which was to clarify the content of the right to food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger. The Commission had strongly endorsed the active involvement by the High Commissioner for Human Rights and several United Nations human rights bodies in achieving that objective.

8. In resolution 1997/22, the Commission had expressed its appreciation of the steps taken by the Sub-Commission to reform and improve its methods of work, particularly the rationalization of its agenda, the initiation of a study on the revision of its work schedule for improved consultation among members, the decision to limit the number of new studies, the compilation of existing rules of procedure and identification of procedural questions to be resolved, and the decision to avoid duplication with the Commission's work. It had requested the Sub-Commission, inter alia, to continue reviewing its working methods with a view to enhancing efficiency and avoiding duplication, to take into account recommendations by the Commission and treaty bodies when choosing subjects for study, to facilitate participation by NGOs in its proceedings and to improve consultations with special rapporteurs undertaking studies for the Sub-Commission. It had also invited the Sub-Commission to prepare specific recommendations on its working methods for consideration by the Commission.

9. Since the establishment of the Sub-Commission 50 years previously, human rights bodies had proliferated and the Commission had developed a wide panoply of mechanisms such as thematic rapporteurs, country rapporteurs and working groups. The Sub-Commission must therefore review its role. In his view, its most important work was accomplished through the study programme and the working groups. He therefore suggested that considerable time should be spent at the current session in reflecting on how performance in both those areas could be improved. As almost all studies had been completed, there was a unique opportunity to plan a future study programme that took full account of existing needs arising from the work of the Commission and the treaty bodies, with which closer contacts should be cultivated. With regard to method, he was convinced that a collective effort was required. The person or persons

responsible for a particular study would benefit from the insights of experts representing different cultures, historical traditions and visions of the future, and follow-up would also become more effective as a result.

10. He had been struck by the important role of thematic working groups as a forum in which experts, NGOs and intergovernmental bodies could deepen their knowledge, strengthen the flow of information, promote coordination and generate enthusiasm for more purposeful action.

11. He trusted that the Sub-Commission would agree on an appropriate role at the current session that would allow it to remain in the forefront of the global promotion of human rights.

STATEMENT BY THE OFFICER-IN-CHARGE, HIGH COMMISSIONER/CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

12. Mr. ZACKLIN (Officer-in-Charge, High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights) paid tribute to the victims of the senseless acts of terrorism that had recently been committed in Israel, condemning in the strongest terms attacks on the life and well-being of innocent people and extending his sympathy to the families and relatives of the victims. Such acts had no justification and could only debase those who committed them. He was also appalled by the continuing violence in Algeria, which had again caused untold suffering among civilians. Those were regrettably only two recent examples of human rights violations. He condemned all ideologies that encouraged hatred and violence and led to the denial of the most fundamental human right: the right to life.

13. The Commission on Human rights, established 50 years previously as the first international body mandated to promote and protect universal human rights, had established the Sub-Commission at its first session in 1947. Over the past 50 years, the independent experts serving on the Sub-Commission, whose number had grown from 12 to 26, had done crucial work for human rights, benefiting people from all parts of the world. The Sub-Commission played a unique role as a "think-tank" for the United Nations human rights programme, and numerous studies, opinions and proposals prepared or inspired by its members had given rise to major human rights initiatives. The Working Group on Indigenous Populations and the Working Group on Minorities were recent examples of successful initiatives. Both had become global forums for experts, the relevant groups of people and representatives of Governments, United Nations bodies, international organizations and NGOs.

14. Human rights occupied a prominent place in the process of reform of the United Nations. The further integration of human rights into United Nations programmes system-wide would ensure that the Organization was more capable of meeting the needs of the international community and that the human rights programme was better equipped to pursue its goals.

15. In his report entitled "Renewing the United Nations, a Programme for Reform" (A/51/950) presented on 16 July 1997, the Secretary-General had stated that human rights were integral to the promotion of peace and security, economic prosperity and social equity and should therefore cut across the four substantive fields of the Secretariat's work programme, namely peace and security, economic and social affairs, development cooperation and

humanitarian affairs. Under the new High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the High Commissioner and the Centre for Human Rights would be consolidated as the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, with the Deputy High Commissioner providing assistance and management support. Although that would complete the restructuring of the human rights part of the Secretariat, reforms aimed at adapting and strengthening human rights machinery would continue in accordance with the recommendations of the World Conference on Human Rights and General Assembly resolution 48/141. In his reform proposals, the Secretary-General had announced that he would ask the High Commissioner to recommend ways and means of streamlining and rationalizing the existing machinery. Top priority would be given to strengthening and coordinating substantive and technical support for legislative bodies and monitoring committees, special procedures, special rapporteurs, special representatives and working groups. While noting that decisions in that area were the prerogative of Member States, the Secretary-General had said that the High Commissioner and he would offer, as appropriate, analysis and proposals to move the process forward.

16. The Sub-Commission had rationalized and streamlined its agenda, in accordance with Commission resolution 1997/22. The provisional agenda had been reduced by almost half and steps had been taken to revise the work schedule and to avoid duplication in taking action on human rights situations. He was confident that the Sub-Commission would persist in its efforts to that end. His Office would, in addition, be assisting it in following the Commission's recommendation that cooperation with the Commission and all other relevant bodies, including the human rights treaty bodies, should be enhanced.

17. His Office joined the Secretary-General in his appeal to the human rights community to seize the opportunity offered by the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to mobilize public opinion and focus worldwide attention on the issue of human rights. His Office would endeavour to assist Governments, the United Nations system, international and regional organizations and NGOs to make preparations for the anniversary year, which would also provide a catalyst for the development of a global partnership for human rights.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS (item 1 (a) of the provisional agenda)

18. The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN invited nominations for the office of Chairman.

19. Mr. ALFONSO MARTÍNEZ proposed Mr. Bengoa.

20. Mr. HATANO and Mr. KHALIFA seconded the proposal.

21. Mr. Bengoa was elected Chairman by acclamation.

22. Mr. Bengoa took the Chair.

23. The CHAIRMAN invited nominations for the offices of Vice-Chairman.

24. Mr. HATANO proposed Mr. Park.

25. Mr. YIMER proposed Mrs. Warzazi.

26. Mr. CHERNICHENKO proposed Mr. Maxim.

27. Mr. Park, Mrs. Warzazi and Mr. Maxim were elected Vice-Chairmen by acclamation.

28. The CHAIRMAN invited nominations for the office of Rapporteur.

29. Mrs. DAES proposed Mr. Bossuyt.

30. Mr. Bossuyt was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

31. The CHAIRMAN said that he was honoured to have been elected Chairman of the forty-ninth session, and that he trusted he would have the requisite independence to enable all participants to express their ideas in a climate of mutual respect and tolerance. He was particularly honoured to chair the Sub-Commission, as it had played a crucial role in treating violations of human rights in his own country, Chile, for more than a decade. At one time, Chile had had the misfortune to be almost a symbol of suffering, torture, disappearances and cruel treatment in the world. In the 1970s it had been one of the most dramatic expressions of the cold war. Chilean society had seen a confrontation, not only between ideals, but also between stereotypes and interests of the great Powers that were alien to its people. The people's suffering had known no limits. Many of those cases had come to the attention of the Sub-Commission, and its resolutions had contributed to alleviating the victims' pain.

32. In 1990, a difficult yet promising democratic transition had begun - one of the many cases of negotiated transitions that typified the end of the cold war and the decade of the 1990s. Flagrant violations of human rights, arbitrary detention and disappearances had ended, democracy and republican institutions functioned in accordance with the Constitution and the rule of law. Nonetheless, the wounds of the past remained. Although efficient systems for compensation of victims had been established, all too many deeds had gone unpunished. Impunity gnawed at the heart of any society, and established a cloak of silence beneath which many wounds continued to bleed. Chile was thus a good example of the situation of human rights in the 1990s. It was also a good example of the shift in thematic concerns. The country's economy was growing year by year, but the national debate was much concerned with poverty, income distribution in an increasingly globalized economy, and the economic rights of individuals - topics that were also central to the international agenda and that of the Sub-Commission as the century drew to a close.

33. At its previous session the Sub-Commission had adopted various changes to its agenda proposed by the outgoing Chairman, changes that constituted improvements to its procedures and which had been endorsed by the Commission on Human Rights at its most recent session. That new agenda would make the Sub-Commission's sessions much more flexible. However, improvements to the agenda were not merely a question of form. The Sub-Commission must have the capacity to respond to the enormous changes occurring in the world, in international politics, and in the life of societies. It must be capable of reporting on the situation of human rights in an increasingly globalized and interconnected world in which many institutions of the cold war epoch had

ceased to have the same role or were simply no longer valid. It must be able to report on the new issues and problems affecting humankind. Throughout its history, one of the Sub-Commission's greatest strengths had been its ability to break new ground. In the Sub-Commission, topics of the utmost importance had first seen the light, detailed studies had laid the foundations for international norms. It must be a body capable of looking beyond present systems of protection and human rights norms, of asking whether those norms were an adequate response to current realities. It was a body with enormous intellectual, moral and political capacity, able to observe the contemporary world and its challenges and to elaborate preliminary proposals. It was a forum in which the most intractable problems could be treated with the calm that its members' wisdom, knowledge and independence conferred. Its capacity was immense, and it could establish a style based on dialogue and on calm analysis of the new phenomena affecting everyone's lives, regarding which no one could lay claim to possessing the absolute truth. The new agenda for the current session could contribute to improving the content of the Sub-Commission's work.

34. One of the Sub-Commission's greatest strengths was its system of inter-sessional working groups. It must thus be equal to the task of discussing their resolutions and results at its current session.

35. The Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery dealt with a number of issues that now gave cause for alarm in many parts of the world. It seemed that, just as the waves of globalization and intercontinental communication in past centuries had been accompanied by old forms of slavery, so too, the new waves of globalization at the end of the twentieth century were accompanied by new forms of slavery involving trafficking in women, children and persons. Under agenda item 6, the Sub-Commission must accord a central place to consideration of the results of the Working Group's latest deliberations.

36. The Working Group on Minorities was gradually becoming perhaps the most important forum dealing with those questions within the United Nations system. The issue of minorities was another facet of the various processes of globalization, and perhaps one of the defining features of the world that was coming into being. In parallel with a globalization of patterns of consumption, production and communication, human groups were acquiring a greater sense of belonging to particular identities and cultures. That was an issue that the Sub-Commission must study, debate and seek to channel, rather than deploring. The Working Group had made considerable progress on topics such as education of minorities, the relationship between minorities and the media, and the residence of displaced persons and minorities. The issues with which it dealt were undoubtedly central among contemporary problems.

37. The Working Group on Indigenous Populations would also submit its resolutions to the Sub-Commission. Indigenous matters were a crucial theme, not only intrinsically, but also because no more appropriate forum for their consideration existed elsewhere in the United Nations system. At its current session the Sub-Commission must debate the resolutions adopted at the highly successful workshop organized by the Centre for Human Rights at Santiago, Chile, in June 1997 and attended by Mrs. Daes, Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group. The contribution of the Sub-Commission would be decisive to

the achievement of indigenous aspirations concerning the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, the draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, and the establishment of the new permanent forum.

38. The Working Group on Communications had met for two weeks to review the full range of information dealt with under the 1503 procedure. That procedure grew in importance year by year, particularly where collective rights, the environment and other highly topical issues were concerned. The Sub-Commission must find time to deal with issues brought to its attention under the appropriate confidential procedure.

39. On 11 April 1997 the Commission had adopted its resolution 1997/22, on the work of the Sub-Commission. Paragraph 1 of that resolution reaffirmed that the views and perspectives of the independent experts should be appropriately reflected in the report of the Sub-Commission, as well as in the expert studies carried out under its auspices. That paragraph deserved highlighting, given that the success of the Sub-Commission depended to a large extent on its members' independence. Safeguarding that independence was the responsibility of all participants: not just members, but also observer States, international bodies and NGOs, all of which must cooperate in protecting the impartiality and independence called for by the Commission. That independence was often threatened by the pressures, going beyond the provision of information and the natural expression of opinions, to which its members were subjected, sometimes greatly to the detriment of their work.

40. The Commission had clearly requested the Sub-Commission to refrain from duplicating action by the Commission with regard to country situations under consideration under the public procedures of the Commission and, furthermore, to limit such action to exceptional cases in which new and particularly grave circumstances arose. That dictum was of the utmost importance for the treatment of item 2 of the new agenda, but it was also valid for all other items in which reference was made to countries. The officers would issue specific instructions indicating those countries concerning which no resolutions would be adopted at the current session. There was no doubt that that resolution would enormously improve the quality of the Sub-Commission's debates, enabling it to focus on the important new themes that were now of concern to humankind. He saw the resolution as exhorting the Sub-Commission to open up new topics for discussion rather than reworking old topics, and the officers would insist on its fulfilling that mandate to the full.

41. The Sub-Commission must guarantee the freedom to debate topics in a climate of mutual respect and tolerance. However, both the Commission and the Sub-Commission were aware that its work methods called for further adjustments. It was therefore to be hoped that at the current session a working group would be set up to consider ways of further improving methods of work. One of the main problems was that the purpose of statements made was often to express a particular point of view rather than contributing to the debate. It often happened that, after hearing the report of a working group or of a special rapporteur, speaker after speaker referred to the topic under consideration only tangentially, or simply ignored it, instead reiterating their own particular interests or points of view. That situation arose again and again, often to the point of driving participants out of the meeting room. While participants and observers had the right freely to express their ideas,

the Sub-Commission must respect its agenda and confine itself to the debate in progress, eliminating the sort of "dialogue of the deaf" that led nowhere. He would be ruthless in interrupting statements that had no bearing on the debate, or which referred to cases and situations already dealt with under previous items. Similarly, the use of an item as a pretext for bringing up a particular situation that added nothing to the debate would not be tolerated. For the debate to be of value, interventions must be short and to the point, and any additional information of relevance could be submitted in writing. The Sub-Commission must allow time for all its participants to exercise their creative capacity, rather than wasting time in repetitive rituals.

42. As the work of the session began, he drew strength from his conviction of the importance of the issues before it, and from his confidence that that complex body, made up of independent experts, representatives of States, NGOs and specialized agencies, was a valuable combination in advancing international norms that would help confer dignity on human life. It was his hope that all those present would weld themselves into one broad forum for debate, devoid of internal hostilities, in which differing viewpoints would contribute to achieving progress in a cumulative creative process.

MINUTE OF SILENCE IN HONOUR OF VICTIMS OF ALL FORMS OF VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN ALL REGIONS OF THE WORLD

43. The CHAIRMAN said that, by its decision 1994/103, the Sub-Commission had decided to observe at the commencement of each of its sessions a minute of silence in honour of the victims of all forms of violations of human rights in all regions of the world.

44. The members of the Sub-Commission observed a minute of silence in honour of victims of all forms of violations of human rights in all regions of the world.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (item 1 (b) of the provisional agenda) (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1997/1 and Add.1)

45. Mr. ALFONSO MARTÍNEZ said that the statements by Mr. Zacklin and by the outgoing Chairman had both stressed that the Sub-Commission had reached an important juncture, at which it was called upon to "change gear". The draft provisional agenda was thus an important document, and one that he broadly supported. Nevertheless, certain items to be found in annex I of the Sub-Commission's report on its forty-eighth session (E/CN.4/1997/2-E/CN.4/Sub.2/1996/41), such as its item 16 (b), were not to be found in the provisional agenda. He thus wished formally to propose that a separate item entitled "Promotion and protection of the human rights of children and young people and prevention of discrimination against them" should be added to the provisional agenda, possibly as a new agenda item 6, with the remaining agenda items renumbered accordingly.

46. Item 10 (b) of the provisional agenda was now entitled "The right to leave and seek asylum and the right to return". That title limited the rights set forth in article 13 (2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which stated that "Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country". He thus proposed that the wording

contained in paragraph 18 (c) of annex I of the Sub-Commission's report, namely, "Right to leave any country, including one's own, and to return to one's own country" should be retained.

47. He welcomed the move to consider the situation of migrant workers and their families under agenda item 3; the elimination of racial discrimination was the most appropriate, if not the only, context within which to consider the issue.

48. He proposed that item 13 (a) should be divided into two sub-items, one on consideration of the future work of the Sub-Commission and one on consideration of the draft provisional agenda for the fiftieth session of the Sub-Commission, as they were two separate issues.

49. With regard to item 11 (a), he proposed that the review of developments should not be limited to recommendations made in earlier studies but should also cover earlier decisions of the Sub-Commission, and that the wording should be slightly altered to show that the list in item 11 (a) was not necessarily exhaustive. He welcomed the inclusion for the first time of item 11 (b) on terrorism and human rights, but emphasized the need to treat such a complex issue with care, since those regarded by some as terrorists were regarded as human rights defenders or irredentists by others.

50. Mrs. DAES asked under which agenda item the Sub-Commission was to consider its contribution to the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. She proposed that a new sub-item should be included under item 7 on indigenous people and their relationship to land, a subject on which she had, in accordance with Commission decision 1997/114, prepared a working paper (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1997/17).

51. Mr. HATANO said that it would be impossible to consider fully the methods of work of the Sub-Commission (item 1 (c)) before members had had time to examine the working paper he had prepared on the subject in accordance with Sub-Commission decision 1996/114, which had been completed but which was unfortunately not yet available. He proposed that methods of work should be discussed at a later stage during the session, and said that discussion of the unresolved problems he had identified was likely to take up a full three-hour meeting.

52. The CHAIRMAN said that Mr. Hatano's point would be considered by the officers of the Sub-Commission.

53. Mr. PARK said that the provisional agenda provided a coherent grouping of the agenda items which would facilitate focused discussions and enhance the efficiency of the Sub-Commission. He particularly welcomed the inclusion of the right to development as a separate sub-item and the move to consider some issues on a biennial basis, a procedure which could be more widely used. He drew attention to a misprint in item 5 (b) of the English text, where "protection" should be changed to "participation".

54. Mrs. PALLEY said she trusted that the practical problems associated with adopting a new agenda would not stifle discussion on problematic subjects. It was also important that the compressed agenda should continue to reflect

faithfully the Sub-Commission's resolutions and decisions. For example, Sub-Commission resolution 1996/10 called for close attention to be paid to the question of the protection of migrant workers and members of their families and Sub-Commission decision 1996/102 talked specifically of "the right to leave any country, including one's own, and to return to one's own country".

55. Excluding agenda item 2 from her remarks, she said that it would be impractical to expect members to limit their statements on each agenda item to 20 minutes when some agenda items dealt with up to five different themes and several studies. Some speakers might prefer to speak for longer on areas of their own expertise and not at all on others. However, flexibility on the part of the Chairman and self-restraint on the part of members would be the best solution.

56. She agreed with Mr. Hatano that questions on methods of work, under item 1 (c), would surely arise at later stages of the debate, for instance, under items where studies were to be considered.

57. Drawing attention to Commission resolution 1997/12, in which the Sub-Commission was requested, inter alia, to take into account recommendations of the Commission on Human Rights and the treaty bodies when choosing subjects for study, she said that unless more documentation was forthcoming, the members of the Sub-Commission could not know what those recommendations were. She believed that there was a need for a study to analyse the gaps in the protection of human rights and the most appropriate way to supplement existing human rights monitoring procedures; such a study could be discussed under agenda items 1 or 13.

58. Finally she called for the question of the privatization of prisons to be included on the agenda as a matter of urgency, even though the Commission only intended the Sub-Commission to return to that subject in five years' time. If the Sub-Commission was to exert any influence, it must act quickly before a leading African State set a decisive and dangerous precedent by going ahead with plans to privatize its prisons.

59. Mr. JOINET agreed with the comments made earlier by Mr. Alfonso Martinez that the new agenda represented a "change of gear": for him, it was unfortunately a change down a gear, with more issues being discussed on a biennial basis as a result of financial pressures. He urged all States that were behind with their contributions to pay them in full so that the Sub-Commission could fulfil its mandate in the best possible circumstances. He also agreed that the original wording of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should be used in agenda item 10, and that item 13 (a) should be divided into two sub-items.

60. He agreed with Mrs. Palley that it would not be realistic to restrict members to speak for 20 minutes on each agenda item. A formal exception should be made, for example, in the case of a member presenting a report and responding to criticisms or comments on it. He would favour a system whereby members would state, at the beginning of the debate on an agenda item, that they did not intend to speak on that item but reserved the right to use that time speaking on some other agenda item.

61. He agreed with Mrs. Daes that the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights would be an excellent opportunity to alert public opinion to human rights issues, and hoped that members of the Sub-Commission would be provided with basic documentation to allow them to play their part in plans for the anniversary.

62. Finally, recalling his previous experience with a less extensive review of the agenda, he said it would be wise to reserve judgement on the effectiveness of the new agenda, and not to take a definite decision on the future form of the agenda until the following session of the Sub-Commission.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.